DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 047 044 UD 011 182

AUTHOR Fruth, Marvin J.; Yee, Albert H.
TITLE Do Black Studies Make a Difference in Elementary School Pupil's Achievement and Attitudes?
PUB DATE Feb 71
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, N.Y., February 1971

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement, *Achievement Gains, Administrator Attitudes, *African American Studies, Changing Attitudes, Curriculum Development, *Elementary School Students, History Instruction, Negro History, *Negro Students, Student Attitudes, Student Teacher Relationship, *Teacher Education, Urban Schools, Urban Youth

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the Integrated Black History Institute was: (1) to educate administrators and teachers; and (2) to develop units of instruction on the black man's contribution to American history. Historians, curriculum experts, media specialists, teachers, principals, and curriculum supervisors participated in the construction of the units. Eight metropolitan areas and 25 classrooms were included in the study. The experimental group, which studied the units, advanced significantly more in content than did the control classes, which did not study the units. The results were similarly significant for each subtest. Boys' lower performance on the pretest was erased by the time of the posttest. (Author/JM)

ED047044

abstract

DO BLACK STUDIES MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTITUDES?

Marvin J. Fruth and Albert H. Yee

The University of Wisconsin

The purpose of the Integrated Black History Institute was 1) to educate administrators and teachers and 2) to develop units of instruction on the black man's contribution to American history.

Historians, curriculum experts, media specialists, teachers, principals, and curriculum supervisors participated in the construction of the units. Eight metropolitan areas and twenty-five classrooms were included in the study.

The experimental group, which studied the units, advanced significantly more in content than did the control classes, which did not study the units. The results were similarly significant for each sub-test. Boys' lower performance on the pre-test was erased by the time of the post-test.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

DO BLACK STUDIES MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTITUDES?*

Marvin J. Fruth and Albert H. Yee

The University of Wisconsin

ED 047044

UD011182

OBJECTIVES OF THE INQUIRY

The purpose of the Integrated Black History Institute was 1) to provide teachers and administrators from predominantly black ghetto elementary schools with an understanding of the black man's contribution to American history and 2) to construct units of study for elementary school children which integrate the black experience into the major concepts of American history.

The specific objectives of the Institute were as follows:

1. To teach "Integrated" American History to teachers and principals from primarily Negro urban elementary schools.

2. To provide these teachers and principals with an opportunity to develop relevant materials under the supervision of historians and curriculum experts to be utilized in the instructional program of the inner-city schools.

3. To help Negro children improve their identity and their achievement through the examination and appreciation of their heritage.

4. To give teachers a better basis for understanding the background and life styles of their students.

* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, N.Y., February 1971

5. To give principals a better basis for understanding the background and life styles of their students as well as the community with which they must interact if the schools are not going to be irrelevant.

6. To fulfill a legitimate demand of the inner-city community to include the contribution of the Negro to American history.

7. To respond to the Kerner Committee indictment of the urban schools by attempting to improve education in the inner city.

A heavy emphasis was placed upon the use of audio-visual materials.

METHODS

Sample

Since the administrator and teacher teams that were selected for the Institute represented a wide range of geographical locations, the evaluative study began with a sample highly representative of ghetto schools serving black people. School districts of the following cities provided intermediate-grade classes for the study: Beloit, Wisconsin; Clarksdale, Mississippi; Milwaukee; Minneapolis; New Orleans; New York; Racine, Wisconsin; St. Louis; Washington, D. C. Each principal cooperating with the project was asked to furnish one control class equivalent to each of his experimental classes except that the control classes would not be exposed to the project's units or other black studies. Although it was desired that control classes be in another school building than the experimental classes to avoid indirect exposure to the units, this arrangement was not possible for most of the controls. However, if there is any contami-

nation of such control classes, the influence would be expected to affect the test of hypotheses in the conservative direction and help emphasize the positive influence of the units if results favored the experimental classes.

The sample providing data for this evaluation included twenty-five experimental and twenty-five control classes with Washington, D. C. supplying the most classes of nineteen, and New Orleans, Racine, and St. Louis supplying the lowest number of two each.

Experimental Design

A pre-test/post-test control group design was established with two levels for each of two independent variables: 1) Experimental vs. Control groups and 2) pupil sex. Due to administrators' constraints in selecting classes, ideal and perfect randomization of the sample for the first factor was not possible, as suggested above. But analyses of pre-test measures and interviews with teachers and visits to all classes indicated no systematic bias favoring Experimental and Control groups in pupil and classroom characteristics.

With such a design, analyses of variance were conducted for each dependent variable with Veldman's AVAR-23 program (1967). The unit of analysis being the class, class means were used in analyses.

DATA SOURCES

Ten dependent variables were established: 1) on a five-point scale, teachers' ratings of pupils' general achievement as compared to typical children of the same age (T); 2) pupils' self-concept as measured by a modified version of an unpublished multi-dimensional

test with one hundred items developed by Pauline Sears at Stanford University's Laboratory of Human Development (S); 3) pupils' attitude toward school and the advantages of education (E), measured with a specially-prepared twenty-item inventory; 4) pupils' knowledge of content covered by the Integrated History units, total score (C), with two equivalent tests, each with forty-eight items; and 5-10) sub-test scores for each of the six units in C--Unit I, C_1 . . . Unit VI, C_6.

Since primary concern in this evaluative study was pupils' achievement gains in C, maximum content validity was developed by involving project historians, school administrators and teachers, and all staff personnel in the writing and verification of items. Each item was reviewed at least four times by most of the participants before it was considered relevant to the content of the unit and testworthy.

The battery of tests was arranged in booklet form for each pupil. In order to control testing conditions, teachers were given detailed instructions on how to administer the tests. To minimize the effect of pupils' reading ability on scores, teachers were instructed to read the items aloud for pupils as they read silently and responded between items.

Pre-test measures were obtained in the first month of the 1969-70 school year, and post-tests were administered in the last month of the same school year. The internal consistency of tests was found to be satisfactory.

RESULTS

Tables 1 and 2 present results highly favorable to the objectives of the project. Although no statistically-significant results were found with pre-test measures for the main effect of treatment, the post-test results as shown indicate that the achievement of classes in the Experimental group advanced significantly more in content (C) than the Control classes. The results were similarly significant for the unit sub-tests (C_{1-6}), analyzed separately. In analyses with the black history test measures, therefore, all differences between groups favored the Experimental group and the probability of obtaining them by chance was less than two out of ten thousand.

There was a significant difference in favoring girls over boys in pre-test C measures, but it became insignificant in post-test measures. The change suggests that girls' traditional superiority in school achievement was somewhat erased by boys' exposure to the project's units. Classroom visitations and interviews indicated that boys generally showed greater interest in the project's units than in ordinary studies.

No significant differences were found with attitudinal measures, standardized achievement test scores, and teachers' ratings of pupils.

TABLE 1

ANOVA Results for Posttest C Scores,
Integrated Black History Test

Source	df	MS	F	p
Experimental group vs. Control group (A)	1	23.53	38.10	.00001
Girls vs. Boys (B)	1	2.30	3.72	.054
A x B	1	.37	.60	.55
Between	3	8.73		
Within	96	.62		
Total	99	.86		

TABLE 2

Means and Standard Deviations
for Posttest C Scores

Group	Girls		Boys	
	M	SD	M	SD
Experimental (N = 25)	22.07	6.07	20.07	5.20
Control (N = 25)	15.82	3.73	14.46	2.63

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The major importance of this study lies in the fact that content-valid units of instruction integrating the black experience with the main concepts of American history can improve the achievement of black children in racially-segregated ghetto schools. Of particular significance was the performance of boys. Their lower performance on the pre-test was erased by the time of the post-test.

Classroom observation indicated an enthusiastic attitude toward the units of instruction on the parts of the teachers and especially of the children. The boys showed an enthusiasm not typical of their general responses to the curriculum. Since attitudes comprise many more dimensions than assessed by this study's instruments and may require more time to significantly influence, the highly-positive results found with the achievement test strongly indicate promise as such work is pursued.